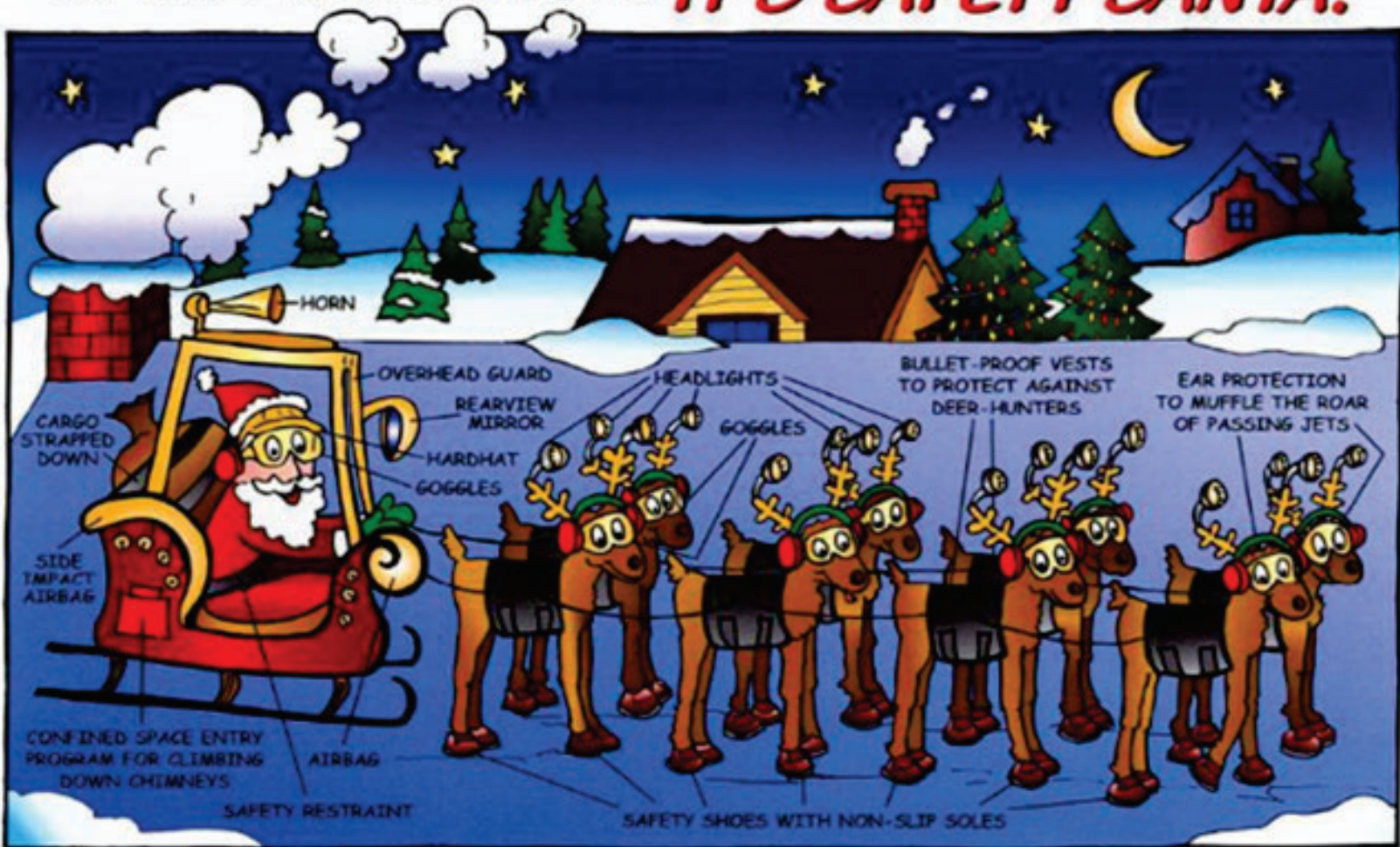


## UP ON THE ROOFTOP... *IT'S SAFETY SANTA!*



## Holiday Season Safety

BY HEATHER OSBORNE

It's the time of year where many people will be decorating their homes, their office, visiting with different friends and family members, cooking, baking and shopping. There is another important factor people need to keep in mind this time of year: Holiday Season Safety!

If you are going over the river and through the woods to visit friends and/or family, be sure to know (the weather forecast) before you go! If there is a major winter storm approaching, your best bet is to stay off the roads and save the visiting for a later date. However, if you must be out and about on the roads, make

sure you have an emergency kit in your car. Items to include: food, water, ice scraper, shovel, rock salt or kitty litter, blanket, gloves, emergency flares/reflectors, phone charger and a first aid kit.

Whether your holiday decorating style is like Clark Griswold or more Grinch-like, it's important to keep fire safety in mind while decorating. Things to keep in mind this time of year include:

1. Do not overload extension cords
2. Turn off/unplug your holiday lights at night and when you leave home.
3. If you have a live tree, keep it watered.

### IN THIS ISSUE

Holiday Season Safety  
- Heather Osborne

Be In The Know  
- Alyssa Backes

Teachwell & 988 In Our Schools  
- Tamara Fish

Updates for I/DD Preparedness During Disasters  
- Deb Hendricks

4.Keep candles away from anything flammable, or better yet, use flameless candles!

5.Check your smoke alarms, make sure they are working!

Don't let your holiday cooking be a disaster! Most house fires start in the kitchen, with cooking being one of the leading causes of home fires during the winter!

1.Keep flammable items away from the stove, including dishtowels, bags, boxes, paper, curtains and cooking magazines (don't ask me how I know..)

2.If you are deep frying a turkey, do it outside!  
3.Turn pot/pan handles towards the back of the stove, out of reach of small hands and out of the way of being bumped into and knocked over.

4.Keep an eye on what you are cooking, unattended cooking is a huge factor in home cooking fires!

5.In the event of a fire in the oven, turn the oven off and keep the door closed.

6.It's so important I'll say it again: Check your smoke alarms, make sure they are working!

**Keep these tips in mind for a happy and safe holiday season this year!**  
**(Safety information obtained from: [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) and [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov))**

## *Be In The Know*

BY ALYSSA BACKES

In a world where we have grown to expect the unexpected, mass notification systems provide an extra level of security when we drop our children off at school, visit the zoo or the aquarium, or simply sitting down in our workplace, knowing that systems are in place to keep us informed and safe if an emergency event takes place. A mass notification system is the most effective way to reach people where they are and how they receive messages. And when an emergency occurs, seconds count!

A mass notification system in the workplace can:

- Provide real-time information
- Reduce the likelihood of accidents
- Mitigate emergencies and damages when they occur
- Maintain public safety

In addition to sending routine employee communications, mass notification systems broadcast messages to inform employees about emergency and crisis situations.

When used in this way it can send real-time alerts and instructions to employees during an emergency so that they can take the appropriate actions to remain safe.

More specifically, mass notification systems can:

- Alert staff to shelter in place when in their workplace
- Alert staff to evacuate their workplace
- Alert staff of an intruder in their workplace
- Alert staff of emergency events taking place near their workplace that may impact them if they are not at work, or that may impact their family or friends
- Alert staff of road closures or other emergency incidents near their workplace that might affect their commute to/from their workplace
- Alert staff of scheduled shift changes

Mass notification systems such as Groupcast, which is used by DMH, often use multiple communication channels to ensure message dissemination.

## **UPCOMING TRAININGS**

### **CPR / AED**

December 18, 2023  
Central Office A/B  
In Person Only



<https://tinyurl.com/CentralOfficeCPR>

### **Winter Preparedness**

December 20, 2023  
Central Office A/B  
In Person / Online



<https://tinyurl.com/WinterPrepare>

### **Earthquake Preparedness**

February 15, 2024  
Central Office A/B  
In Person / Online



<https://tinyurl.com/EarthquakePrepared>

Groupcast has the capacity to blast all, a select few, or even just one of these channels for notification: a work email address, a personal email address, and a text or phone call to a desk phone, work cell phone, or personal cell phone – whichever you so choose.

## *TeachWell & 988 In our Schools*

BY TAMARA FISH

The Crisis and Disaster Response Liaison recently engaged in constructive discussions with several School District Superintendents, offering an invaluable platform to delve into the initiatives aimed at bolstering educator well-being. A focal point of this exchange was TeachWell, a pioneering text-based wellness program generously provided by the Missouri Department of Mental Health as a token of gratitude for educators.

TeachWell stands as a multifaceted program meticulously designed to fortify the mental health and overall well-being of educators. Acknowledging the profound influence of educators' emotional and mental equilibrium on their ability to cultivate a nurturing learning environment, TeachWell offers an array of courses. These courses cover pivotal subjects such as preempting burnout, accessing support systems, harnessing the benefits of physical movement, navigating challenges related to depression and anxiety, and fostering resilience through dedicated self-care and collaborative team-based practices.

**Sign-Up Today:**



<http://tinyurl.com/DMHGroupCast>

In an effort to facilitate participation in this vital wellness initiative, TeachWell table tents and posters were thoughtfully distributed and prominently displayed within educational institutions, encouraging educators to actively engage in this enriching program.

Moreover, during these meetings, School Superintendents were furnished with the invaluable Suicide Prevention & 988 Guide for Schools. This essential guide, emerges as a cornerstone resource crafted to cater to the diverse needs of schools statewide. Its core objective revolves around assisting educational institutions in implementing robust suicide prevention strategies, intervention tactics, crisis response services, and post-crisis support resources into their operational frameworks and day-to-day practices.

These initiatives collectively stand as pivotal steps in fortifying the mental health landscape within educational settings, fostering a nurturing environment that prioritizes the well-being of educators and students alike.

**TRAINING  
ALWAYS  
AVAILABLE**

**FEMA ICS 100 & 200 and  
700 & 800 for Senior &  
Exec Leadership  
Management Systems  
(NIMS):**

<https://tinyurl.com/NIMS-100>

<https://tinyurl.com/NIMS-200>

<https://tinyurl.com/NIMS-700>

<https://tinyurl.com/FEMA-800>

**Psychological First Aid:**

<https://tinyurl.com/PFA-online>

**Trauma-Informed Care:**

<https://modmh.thinkific.com/>



**For further details and access to these initiatives:**

**TeachWell Program: Visit [TeachWell | dmh.mo.gov](https://dmh.mo.gov)**



**988 Guide for Schools: [Missouri 988 Toolkit - School Resources \(google.com\)](https://www.missouri.gov/988-toolkit)**



# Updates for I/DD Preparedness During Disasters

BY DEB HENDRICKS

Disasters and emergencies can happen any time, at any place and, sometimes, without warning. That is why preparedness is our recommendation for everyone, but especially for individuals with developmental disabilities.

Recent information presented by the National Institutes for Health says that “Compared to persons without a disability, those with a disability experience disproportionate risks and encounter greater obstacles at all phases of disasters, including preparedness.”

Preparedness is certainly of concern.

According to a recent survey, 84 percent of persons with disabilities reported not having a personal preparedness plan for disasters. Even more concerning, this was less than reported in 2013 in the same survey by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Office of Disaster Services feels this is unacceptable, especially for the individuals served by DMH. That is why we have begun a project to educate both individuals and providers on disaster preparedness.

We have created two guidebooks – one for individuals and a companion piece for providers – to make preparedness planning easier. These guides break down planning into easy steps by asking questions that individuals can answer by themselves or with the assistance of those who support them – case managers, care providers, parents, guardians, or anyone else who assists them. The questions, when answered completely, generate a preparedness plan that can be added to any disaster information created by families or providers, The companion provider guidebook leads those who serve individuals with I/DDs through the same steps, asking them questions to consider when planning for each individual served. It also includes information on preparing for their own families so they will feel comfortable leaving home to come to work.

The project will include video trainings, interactive activities and resources to assist at any time. Watch for it to appear on the DMH website soon!

## Jenn's Jokes

IN LOVING MEMORY OF JENN SOVANSKI

**How much did Santa pay for his sleigh?**

Nothing, it was on the house.

**What do you call a snowman with a six-pack?**

An abdominal snowman.

**Why does Santa always enter through the chimney?**

Because it soots him.

**FOR MORE  
INFORMATION**



Missouri Department of  
Mental Health  
Office of Disaster Services

1706 East Elm  
P.O. Box 687  
Jefferson City, MO 65102

573-526-7821

WEBSITE  
<http://dmh.mo.gov/disaster-services>

SOCIAL MEDIA  
Facebook | Twitter | Instagram  
@DMHDisaster

